

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

Castillo de San Marcos National Monument in St. Augustine, Florida, contains the oldest remaining European fortification in the United States. Built more than one hundred years after the founding of St. Augustine by the Spanish in 1565, the Castillo stands as a reminder of a century of conflict between the European powers for control of North America. Its bastioned design also represents the conventions of military architecture and technology of its day. The Castillo additionally illustrates the waning power of Spain in the Southeast, principally after the United States won its sovereignty. The long history of Castillo de San Marcos and its distinctive character and architecture attest to the significance of the monument to the story of the United States and the building of a nation.

### **DESCRIPTION OF CASTILLO DE SAN MARCOS NATIONAL MONUMENT**

Castillo de San Marcos National Monument comprises approximately 20.48 acres in St. Augustine, St. Johns County, Florida. The park lies north of St. Augustine's central plaza and fronts Matanzas Bay. Built as the northernmost Spanish stronghold in the southeastern United States and as a defense against pirate attacks on St. Augustine, the Castillo was originally located at the northern edge of the city, where it commanded the land and sea routes into the settlement. Today, colonial St. Augustine extends south of the monument, while the modern city has grown around this core in all directions.

The city of St. Augustine lies on the eastern coastal plain of Florida. It is a low-lying, sandy area protected from the sea by a number of barrier islands. The San Sebastian River runs west of the city and formed a natural boundary for the colony early in its history. A seawall and water battery separate Castillo de San Marcos from the waters of Matanzas Bay on the fort's east side. The site of the Castillo is a rolling, grassy area sprinkled with a few trees. The outer portions of the grounds are flat up to the glacis, which slopes upward toward the fort and roughly follows the contour of the moat and covered way. The park area is irregular in shape, with much of its western boundary following the contour of State Road A-1-A. West of the fort, beginning at the bottom of the glacis near the northwest bastion, is the reconstructed Cubo Line. The defense work runs west from the glacis to the City Gate, interrupted by State Road A-1-A just east of the gate.

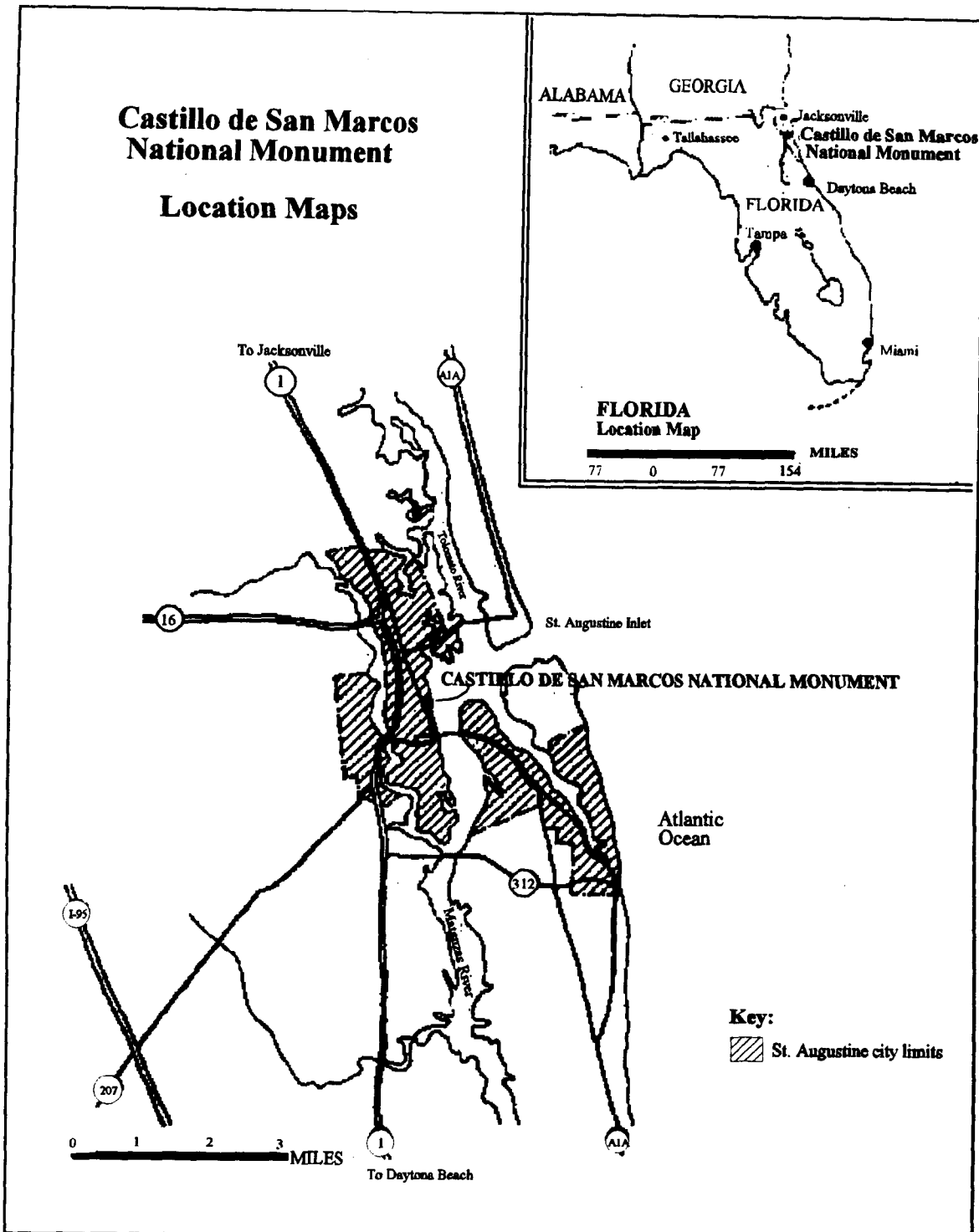


Figure I. Location of Castillo de San Marcos National Monument

The Spanish founded St. Augustine in 1565 and, following an English pirate raid on the city in 1668, began construction of Castillo de San Marcos in 1672. The Castillo had been completed for less than a hundred years, however, when Florida became a diplomatic pawn. Control of Florida passed to the English in 1763, only to revert to the Spanish twenty-one years later. Finally, in 1821, Spain agreed to a treaty that transferred ownership of Florida to the United States, and Florida became an American territory.

The United States War Department administered the Castillo, renamed Fort Marion, for more than a century. During the early years, troops garrisoned in St. Augustine stored supplies at the fort. The building also housed prisoners of war from a number of conflicts with Native American groups during the nineteenth century. After the Civil War, Fort Marion was no longer necessary to national defense, and although it remained an active fortification in name, the Castillo was regarded as a historic relic by the military. In 1915 the War Department entered into an agreement with the St. Augustine Historical Society to provide guide service to the public. The Castillo was declared a national monument in 1924, and in 1933 its administration passed from the War Department to the National Park Service.

The historic resources at Castillo de San Marcos National Monument include the Castillo, moat, covered way, glacis, ravelin, City Gate, reconstructed Cubo Line, water battery, seawall, and hot shot furnace. The Castillo, moat, covered way, glacis, ravelin, and Cubo Line date from the First Spanish Period, while the City Gate dates from the Second Spanish Period. The water battery, seawall, and hot shot furnace date from the War Department era. The park interprets all of the structures as part of the evolution of the defenses of St. Augustine during the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The St. Augustine National Landmark District exists near Castillo de San Marcos National Monument; its resources illustrate the growth of the city which the fort was built to protect.

#### **SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY**

The Historic Resource Study (HRS) identifies and evaluates, using National Register criteria, the historic properties within the national monument. The study establishes and documents historic contexts associated with the park and evaluates the extent to which the surviving historic resources represent those contexts. The completed HRS will serve as a tool for future site planning, resource management, and the continuing development of interpretive programs at the monument.

Castillo de San Marcos National Monument has been the subject of numerous investigations undertaken by the National Park Service, including historic structure reports, archeological investigations, and detailed studies of the fort's history. This report utilizes previous research to evaluate the park's resources through the development of historic contexts. This HRS and associated survey documentation will provide park management with information on historic structures, an interpretive framework for the park, and updated National Register documentation.

Castillo de San Marcos National Monument was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1966 with the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act. The Keeper of the Register accepted the nomination of the park as a historic district in March 1977. This documentation named the Castillo, City Gate, and water battery as contributing structures. The contexts developed in this study will be used to supplement the original documentation and support the addition of the moat, covered way, glacis, ravelin, Cubo Line, seawall, and hot shot furnace as contributing properties within the district.

## **SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS**

### **Survey Methodology**

Goals of the historic resource survey of the Park are to 1) update the List of Classified Structures (LCS) database for the Park for use by park management; 2) prepare a Historic Resource Study for the Park; 3) update the Park's National Register of Historic Places documentation; and 4) assemble a comprehensive survey of structures consisting of a photographic record for each structure built prior to 1950 and considered eligible for listing in the National Register. This will be used in complying with Sections 106 and 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

The initial survey of Castillo de San Marcos was completed under a cooperative agreement with the University of Georgia Research Foundation. The survey, led by Principal Investigator William Chapman, concentrated on four structures within park boundaries, the Castillo, water battery, City Gate, and reconstructed Cubo Line, and one structure located outside park boundaries, the Orange Street Annex. Denise Larimore prepared a draft Historic Resource Study based on the survey work and additional research.

In November 1995, Jennifer D. Brown and Jill K. Hanson, working under the direction of the National Park Service Southeast Field Area, revisited the Park and surveyed six additional structures, the ravelin, moat, covered way, glacis, hot shot furnace, and Tricentennial Marker. Brown wrote the current Historic Resource Study based on the Larimore text and further research and documentation.

### **Determination of Historic Contexts**

This study evaluates the historic integrity and assesses the eligibility of the park's historic resources within two historic contexts. These contexts correspond to historic themes identified by the National Park Service in its revised thematic framework and by the Florida State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). The Florida SHPO has identified thirty-five distinct historic contexts for Florida history, many of which relate to the resources at Castillo de San Marcos National Monument.

The following two historic contexts have been developed for the current study: 1) The Struggle for Florida and Construction of Castillo de San Marcos, 1565 - 1821; and 2) The United States War Department at Fort Marion, 1821 - 1933.

The first context, “The Struggle for Florida and Construction of Castillo de San Marcos, 1565-1821,” relates to the NPS themes “Peopling Places,” “ Shaping the Political Landscape,” and “Changing Role of the United States in the World Community.” The context also relates to several aspects of Florida history, including, “First Spanish, 1513-1763,” “British, 1763-1782,” and “Second Spanish, 1783 - 1820.” This context considers the early history of Florida and the events that led the Spanish government to build the Castillo in St. Augustine. It also briefly examines the Castillo as a typical defensive fortification for its time. The context further discusses the turbulent eighteenth century in Florida, during which possession of the Castillo was lost and later regained by the Spanish.

The second context, “The United States War Department at Fort Marion, 1821-1933,” relates to the NPS themes “Shaping the Political Landscape” and “Changing Role of the United States in the World Community.” The context also relates to the Florida SHPO’s chronological contexts of the American period in Florida. In 1821 Spain agreed to cede Florida to the United States, and the Castillo became property of the War Department. This context chronicles the history of Fort Marion, as it was called, throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, first as part of the American coastal defense system and later as the focus of early preservation efforts in St. Augustine. It ends with the transfer of the Castillo from the War Department to the National Park Service in 1933.

Historic resources within the park represent three periods of significance. The First Spanish Period, 1565-1763, includes the initial settlement of Florida by the Spanish; this period is represented by Castillo de San Marcos and the moat, covered way, glacis, and ravelin. The Second Spanish Period witnessed the construction of the City Gate and Cubo Line as reinforcing elements of the Castillo’s defense. This period encompasses the second occupation of Florida by the Spanish from 1784-1821. Finally, the seawall, hot shot furnace, and water battery represent the War Department period of the Castillo’s history, 1821 - 1933, when the United States government administered the fort through that executive agency.

## **HISTORICAL BASE MAP DISCUSSION**

The historical base map (Appendix B) depicts the existing historic resources within the park that are documented in this study. The map shows the Park boundaries, nearby bodies of water, and major area highways. National Park Service maps prepared by the Denver Service Center for the Park’s General Management Plan served as the basis for the maps included in this study. The historical base map does not attempt to depict a historic scene or identify nonextant historic structures.